COMMUNICATIONS.

OUR NATIONAL SCULPTURES.

TO THE EDITORS.

I see in the daily papers that the President has entered into a contract with Clark Mills, according to which Mr. M. is to execute in bronze a colossal statute of Washington for some one of the public places in the metropolis.

Before the design be irrevocably determined it may be well to suggest a consideration of some of the principles by which a great work of art in this branch may be known from an inferior one, and to examine what has been done in the light of those principles.

Mr. Mills will certainly excuse any criticism of his previous work which may suggest real faults, the avoidance of which may enable him to produce a work that will stand as far above even his Jackson as the character of the Father of his Country overtops that of his successors.

It will be obvious that a work of monumental statuary must embody the three main constituents of the character represented, viz. his will, his intellect, his activity; and, further, that any work is great in proportion as the higher of these constituents are developed, mere physical likenesses being supposed in all cases.

A man's characteristic attitude or motion may be represented in the statue—some trick of manner, with accuracy of costume and feature. So far it is recognisable.

But suppose the statue were made to embody some idea of the man's intellectual capacity. The expression of concentration or rather abstraction (from surrounding circumstances) of his thought will produce a very different treatment from the above. The trick of attitude, such as occurs when he is in action, must give way in a measure to physical repose. The power of the impersonation is now of traits, which are in some measure independent of attitude and costume. We have got deeper in the real man, and recognise in the work something of the intellect that guides our own. *If we get all this* we can give up the accessories, such as peculiar position and costume, for the sake of the higher qualities.

But further. We erect our statues in honor of heroes, or those whom we suppose to be heroes. Do we find that the intellect and the powers of activity make the hero? By no means. There is the steam to be accounted for which uses the boiler and drives the piston, and makes these turn the wheels of the final machinery.

It is will (or *character*, in the proper sense of the word) that makes the hero. Will is the internal motive-power that drives intellect and activity wherever it *wills* them to go. *They never disobey.* Now, if we put this superhuman and intense fire of will (as of Washington or Jackson) into our statue, we may give up not only some of the activity but some of the intellect also. For so, in fact, it is in real life. The heroic are rarely the most intellectual or most active. They *use* intellectual and active men. They drive the pistons and the levers, and the whole machinery over which they preside moves on.

Now, to return a few steps. It is never in the moment of a hero's action that the observer sees his power. I speak from experimental observation. Seek the man of power when he is quiet; when his immediate environment is forgotten; when he sits among the satellites, and his abstracted gaze takes note of spiritual entities; when his great purposes stand miraged before him, and he forgets the desert and the precipice, forgets the failing and merely physical instruments with which he must labor, and his intensity of will almost brings his heroic future to his footstool, without the intervening toil and danger.

If the *action* be represented, we see only a partial result, for no man's ideal is ever fully accomplished, and in nine cases out of ten we see that partial result without any of the labored thoughts or triumphing will by which it was achieved.

Let me illustrate these views by reference to Mr. Mills's statue of Jackson. The horse is rearing, and the rider, holding the reins with one hand, has raised his chapeau with the other high above his head. It has been stated that the moment intended to be represented is that at which Jackson, at the battle of New Orleans, gave an order to advance. What was the essence of the order? Was it not will and courage? Did not the order contemplate careful forethought and completed arrangements, with a reserve of moral force sufficient to counterbalance all thoughts of physical pain or death? And does this rearing of a horse, does the lifting of a hat, express the ideal of all this? There was cool observation, cool deliberate thought, a moment in which the roaring cannon, the rattling musketry, the flying balls were unheard, and the mind quickly grasped the aspect of the field and the moral power of an army (high themes these) ere the word was spoken. That was the moment to represent.

The horse did not rear then, the chapeau was not upraised, but the hero sat still, and, eye and lip unmoved, ministered to a soul's purposes. Any slave could speak the word "charge!" but knowledge and decision determined the "when."

The moment, then, was illy chosen for the statue. It is not the hero that we see, but a subaltern passing the word.

But there are several more practical considerations involved. To one who possesses sensibilities keen enough to judge of the real excellence of a truly fine work of art, the *weariness* suggested by the continuance of the horse in a position in which no horse can sustain himself for more than a moment, and the continuance of the rider's arm in a position in which no man can keep his arm for three minutes, is sufficiently disturbing and annoying to interfere most seriously and even fatally with any impression which should be produced by the supposed higher qualities of the work. The fault is, however, not only in the rearing of the horse and the raising of the arm; it is also in the fact that they are supposed to be the result of the actual tension of the muscles at the moment. Apparent action may sometimes be tolerated in parts of a statue if the action be upon its decline—that is, in the moment after the violent muscular action occurred, for the mind is not then worried with the impossibility of an unceasing muscular tension. This is the case with the statue of Jefferson, (in front of the President's house.) "But many fine statues have been sculptured in which violent action is seen." Not so. No such statue was ever good, or ever can be. "The Laocoon" is the universal reference. Even this celebrated group has been proven by Sir Chas. Bell and John Ruskin to be utterly destitute of any other than technical merits merely.

Repose, then, is the first principle, the real vitality of sculpture. Without it all is mean, with it something must be noble. All the noblest paintings in the world (as well as sculptures) show this to be a truth. There is *no great picture*, no great form, no great statue, no great work of architecture, in which repose is not more prevalent than action is.

True, this sweeps away nearly all our "national sculptures;" refuses Greenough's Washington, Persico's Columbus, Mills's Jackson the ticket of immortality. That is merely a consequence of a truth which is higher than the works that violate it; a truth which must be acknowledged and humbly followed before we can have one good statue in the Capitol. Let the sculptor regard it; let the public taste refuse to be content with a vulgarly phrenzied Columbus; a Washington that, without purpose or dignity, holds a sword in one hand, and points, no one knows at what, with the other; with a Jackson which, performing an impossible piece of horsemanship, lifts the chapeau from pure lack of thought or will.

Let us call for noble and inspired works, which shall tell of souls nobler than our own, which shall represent to us some lesson from the ideal of the hero's inmost heart, and tell us of some better exercise of thought than that which provides for the balancing of so many tons of bronze on some one little point.

All who have seen the large stipple engraving executed after Corbould's drawing of Chantrey's statue of Washington have been awe-struck by the strange solemnity of the calm and lofty figure. So still, so simple, it is quiet as an infant's sleep, yet so full of latent power that it realizes our purest ideal. But go to the Boston State-house to see the original statue, and the disappointment is indeed bitter. The figure is *shrinking* and in motion—in fact, utterly contemptible. The draughtsman, by a fortunate error, *missed* the motion and the shrinking, and his unintended gift of repose has made the *picture* of the statue almost sublime.

The origin of the universal error of our "national sculptures" seems to be the idea that a statue must represent some definite action of the man who is typified. Let us for a moment inquire how far this is within the province of the plastic art. External activities are appreciable by the external senses and lowest mental perceptions. The thought-power takes their observations and reasons from them, analyzing all the concomitant circumstances back to the intellectual causes or the intellectual means. This is the work which the intellect is to do for us in history and biography. But now art comes in with its still higher ministration, and by the inspired insight of its votaries (the men of genius) penetrates at once to the inmost motor of all these thoughts and actions, takes us indeed to the sun, around which all the planets and their satellites move in due order, according to their relative weight, density, and distance. As the sun is quiet while controlling this enormous system, so is the will unmoved and intense, shedding warmth and light upon its revolving means and activities.

If this be denied, I would remark that its truth is indirectly though thoroughly proven in the fact that we call no one a hero who is the sport of circumstances. Heroism is first and mainly shown in that the hero controls the very circumstances that themselves control weaker men. The very defeat that would destroy one man is the very means which completes the victory of another. When we see struggle we see a power which is not stronger than its enemies. When we see repose we regard its possession as having latent power equal to all the unrest that shall attack him.

I will conclude with an anecdote of Falconnet, the distinguished sculptor of the colossal equestrian statue of Peter the Great at St. Petersburgh. He had in his studio a cast of the celebrated equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius standing near the model of his own great work. Upon some occasion he took the trouble to show his pupils that the anatomy of the horse of M. Aurelius was so defective that every joint was as if dislocated, while in the horse of his own Peter the Great every bone and muscle was anatomically correct. "And yet, gentlemen," he exclaimed, "I must confess that mine is a dead horse and that (pointing to the Aurelius) is a live horse."

So it is with the statue of Jackson; the horse is evidently not alive, for he is doing what no live horse can do.

Let us earnestly call upon the sculptor to give us in his Washington the genuine hero upon a live horse, and to relieve us from the monstrosity of unexceptionable bridles and faultless epaulets.

Let him remember, in all solemn feeling and humility of purpose, that he is called upon to give us the ideal of the master man of the world. This is no light task, especially when we note that it is the artist's duty to go deeper into the spirit of his subject, and bring forth something which were else beyond the ken of noblest intellects.

S. B. WITHERALD.

Baltimore, August 5, 1853.

TO THE EDITORS.

Messrs. Gales & Seaton: I have just seen the National Intelligencer of the 14th ultimo, containing a communication on "Spiritualism," in reply to Mr. Tallmadge, and signed "*Homo*." I presume Mr. T. feels himself under no obligation to reply to anonymous correspondents; I therefore take leave to correct some of the misconceptions of the writer.

He supposes that the mediums may have waited over a day "to be enabled to have access to an autograph letter of Mr. Calhoun, and impress a counterfeit of it with invisible ink on a sheet of paper in such a manner that the words were rendered legible by some application of heat or electricity." Now, this supposition shows how easily one may deceive and delude himself where all his prejudices are in favor of producing such a result. But for this the writer would never have attempted to build an argument on a state of facts that never existed except in his imagination. Mr. T.'s statement of the manifestation shows that the "sentence" purporting to come from Mr. Calhoun was written with a *pencil;* that there was neither pen nor *ink* employed in writing it, and of course, even on the writer's most improbable supposition, there was nothing to be operated upon by "heat or electricity." I would also add, as another fact, that the paper on which the sentence was written was procured by Mr. T. himself, as he informs us, and was never in the possession, power, or control of the mediums, either before or after the sentence was written. This sentence was shown to General Hamilton, General Thompson, General Campbell, and other intimate friends of Mr. Calhoun, and also to one of his sons, and they all pronounced it the hand-writing, or a perfect *fac simile* of the hand-writing, of Mr. Calhoun. Where, then, is the supposed delusion? Here is the writing and here is the proof. What more is wanted?

But the writer cannot believe that the laws of gravity could be overcome by raising the table from the floor; neither can he explain, except on the spiritual theory, how the table could be rivetted to the floor against the efforts of four to raise it; neither can he explain on any other principle how the handle of the bell could make such indentations in the wood of a cherry table. There are the facts, and about all of which there could be no delusion or deception. Mr. T. related the same facts last winter to some of the most distinguished men in the nation. They all said they were just as well satisfied of the existence of the facts as if they had seen them themselves; and that, if the facts were in issue on the trial of a man for his life, his testimony would convict and execute him!

"*Homo*" has evidently never had an opportunity to investigate this matter. If he had he would have been entirely satisfied that there is no fraud or imposture, and in regard to the facts there could be no deception or delusion. Those who are opposed to the spiritual theory concede all this, but attempt to account for these phenomena in some other way.

The writer's idea of the ubiquity of spirits is mere assumption. There are no facts on which he can rest such a supposition. No spiritualist pretends any such thing. The communications received deny any such power; but, as spirits move through space with the rapidity of thought, all the phenomena of their presence at particular times or places are explained, and his inference of omnipresence, omniscience, &c. falls to the ground.

The writer adds: "I deny that the enlightened men of the present age believe that departed spirits revisit the earth; it is a vagary of the Senator's fancy to assert it; and the assertion is not susceptible of proof." If this be a vagary of the Senator, it has also been the vagary of all past ages and of the present time. I assert that it is the belief of all christian denominations that spirits do revisit the earth; that they attend us and impress us. This belief is so universal that I have not heard it controverted during all these discussions, except by your correspondent. I will proceed to give some authorities for this belief, which will show that it is any thing but a vagary of Mr. T.

"The opinion," says an able author, (R. K. Cralle, of Virginia,) "that men are acted upon and influenced by spiritual beings, whether called angels, spirits, demons, or devils, is coeval with the earliest records of our race and coextensive with all human society. There never was a period when it did not prevail, nor a people that did not entertain it. The theological systems of every nation on the globe with which we have any acquaintance give the doctrine a prominent place. The Jewish, Egyptian, Indian, Persian, Chaldean, Grecian, and Roman records attest the fact. The ancient philosophers—men who not only impressed themselves on the age in which they lived, but the traces of whose deep wisdom are not yet entirely effaced—universally admitted and inculcated the doctrine, not excepting even the founders of what are called the atheistical sects. Thales, the earliest amongst the Grecian philosophers, according to Cicero, Plutarch, Stobœus, and the christian philosopher Athenagoras, taught that the souls of men after death were *spiritual substances*, distinguished into good and evil, and that they acted directly and powerfully on men during their life in this world. The same doctrine was taught by the Egyptian priests before the time of Thales, as we are told by Jamblicus and others; and such was the theory of Pythagoras and Plato, as we learn from Plutarch, Cicero, Psellus, and Fabricius. Zeno and his followers maintained the same doctrine with a clearness and force hardly credible when we consider the age in which they lived."

President Dwight gave full credence to the agency of spirits, and informs us that "angels (or spirits) should communicate thoughts, either good or evil, to mankind is originally no more improbable than that we should communicate them to each other. We do this daily and hourly in many ways which are familiar to us by experience, but which were originally unimaginable by ourselves, and probably by any other finite beings. We show our thoughts, to each other by words, tones, gestures, silence, hieroglyphics, pictures, letters, and many other things. All these, antecedent to our experience of them, were hidden in absolute darkness from our conception. If all mankind had been born dumb, no man would have entertained a single thought concerning the communication of ideas by *speech*. The conveyance of thought by *looks* also, if never experienced by us, would have been necessarily deemed mysterious and impossible. Yet very many thoughts are thus conveyed by every person living, and with very great force, and frequently with very great precision. Nay, the countenance often discloses the whole character at once."

Again: Dr. Johnson, one of the most enlightened and most celebrated men of his own or of any age, as cited by another author, maintained the same belief. He observed that the idea of the spirits of the deceased revisiting the scenes on earth where in the flesh they had either suffered or rejoiced seems to have been grafted in the human mind by the Creator; and for the obvious salutary purpose of keeping alive in it the belief of a *future state;* the conviction that we are connected with the *spiritual world;* the assurance that the great compound man shall not "all die," but that his better and essential part, that *soul* which distinguishes him from "the beasts that perish," preserved from the ruin that shatters his material frame, still—

> "Shall flourish in immortal youth,
> Unhurt amid the war of elements,
> The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds."

If, then, it be allowed that such a notion, for such a reasonable final cause, make a part of man's original constitution, it seems to be a fair inference that this conception would be nourished and supported by occasional allowed appearances of the disembodied shade, or in permitted *impressions* upon the imagination of such appearances; and that this is the actual fact we have all the evidence that the mind in a proper state of conviction can desire—that is, exercising its reasoning faculty, but sensible at the same time of the narrow limits by which that reason is bounded and the imperfection in which it is enjoyed. We have the concurring accounts of all nations and ages of the world for the authentication of the fact; we have the solemn and dispassionate assertions of the wise and good to corroborate it; we have the records of history and the declarations of Scripture to confirm it.

The above authorities will show that this idea of spirits visiting us and impressing us is no vagary of Mr. T., but that the belief is universal. Hence I conclude, if they visit us and *impress* us, there is no objection to believing that there is now a mode by which they can communicate with us, provided the facts justify that belief. The conclusion is both reasonable and philosophical. That the facts do justify it, I assert without the fear of contradiction from any one who has investigated this subject with a sincere desire to ascertain the truth, and who has had the opportunity so to do. The facts do not rest on any man's bare assertion; there are hundreds who could give and have given facts more astounding than those given by Mr. T. These physical manifestations cannot be put aside by the senseless cry of "trickery," "jugglery," "delusion," "infatuation," &c., with which the communication of your correspondent is so profusely ornamented. These epithets prove nothing, and are unworthy the discussion of so grave a subject. Neither does such language prove any thing against communications received; communications both in style and sentiment of the most exalted character, infinitely beyond the capacity of the medium, and worthy of and beyond the highest efforts of those from whom they purport to come in their best days on earth. Gentlemen must meet and account for these things on some other theory. If they object to the spiritual theory, let them establish some other. They can no longer cry "imposture and delusion." That time has gone by. They must meet the facts and the arguments.

X.

Mr. WEBSTER'S ALLUSION TO "THE JACKDAW."

Messrs. Gales & Seaton:

An anecdote has been variously published relative to an allusion made by the great Statesman, on one of the last days of his life, to a stanza of Cowper's [illegible] Vincent Bourne's lines to a Jackdaw; and the circumstances accompanying the allusion differ so widely, as heretofore related, from the facts as they were told to the writer of this, a few days after Mr. Webster's decease, by a friend who was present, that I will trespass on you for a small space in your paper to "tell the tale as 'twas told to me," in which, instead of the feeble remark to his physician, "I feel like a jackdaw," we have a strong and forcible illustration, worthy of the unclouded intellect of Daniel Webster.

A few days prior to Mr. Webster's death, and while he was able to be up and to walk the room, a friend called upon him, and, after conversing with him, rose to take leave. Mr. Webster also rose, and as they were about to separate the visiter alluded to the political movements that were going on, and the connexion of Mr. Webster's name with the Presidential canvass. Mr. Webster remarked, in his usual impressive manner, "The political movements of men are of no consequence to me; I have nothing more to do with the affairs of this world; I am like the Jackdaw on the church steeple—

> "'He sees that this great roundabout,
> The world, with all its motley route,
> Church, army, physic, law;
> Its customs, and its businesses,
> Is no concern at all of his,
> And says—what says he?—caw!'"

The gentleman who related to me this occurrence remarked that Mr. Webster's tone and manner in repeating the foregoing stanza were fully equal to any thing he ever heard from his lips in his best days.

F.

FOR THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

Messrs. Editors: It is a well known fact that a glass tube when placed before a fire will in a few moments move towards the source of heat, and the attraction is so great that the tube will even move up a gentle ascent. Various explanations have been given of this phenomenon, none of them, I believe, entirely satisfactory. Your scientific readers will pardon another attempt at a solution of the difficulty, which, if it has no other merit, demands attention from the fact of its being *new;* a highly valued consideration in our day, when the cold shoulder is turned to old things, and all new things are so eagerly sought after. I offer it to you in all simplicity, hoping that, if not itself satisfactory, it may elicit something from higher sources in regard to a matter apparently trifling, but upon which may hang principles of great import. I will cheerfully run the risk of being laughed at, provided that I may be the means of producing with the smile some satisfactory explanation from any quarter of a phenomena in natural philosophy which has puzzled my brain not a little. My theory is this:

As the air in the tube becomes heated it rushes out at either end, and is of course drawn in two currents towards the source of heat, whether it be from a grate or the flame of a lamp. An attractive force thus acts upon the tube as if a thread were passed through it and the two ends united were drawn by the hand. The currents of air flowing from the ends of the tube, forming the thread and being very slender, are drawn towards the fire or flame upon a well-known principle. When a fire is kindled in a still night there is a current of air from all quarters towards it. When the tube is placed before a fireplace there is of course a strong draught to act upon it.

This theory can be tested in a very easy manner. If the ends of the tube were hermetically sealed and the tube should still approach the fire, this explanation is worth nothing. Not having an opportunity to apply this test, I have been rash enough to submit it for the examination of others more advantageously situated.

It will be objected by any one giving this theory a mere cursory consideration that, admitting it to be true as regards the flow of the air currents, a motion of the tube from the fire rather than towards it would be produced. But I think a more particular examination will satisfy any one that the objection is not well grounded. At present, however, I will say no more, waiting for the test above suggested to be applied.

Yours, &c. E. M.

Romney, Virginia, July 8, 1853.

TO THE EDITORS.

Gentlemen: I make it a point never to enter into a discussion with an opponent whose only arguments are flat contradictions of my statements of fact; so I offer no reply to Mr. Albert Welles Ely, who introduced himself into the Intelligencer of the 7th instant.

For the satisfaction of yourselves, and those of your readers who are willing to accord some credit to my assertions until they are proved false, I give the following few words: The suggestion of Sir John Herschel, that the brain is a species of galvanic battery, may be found on page 343 of one of the editions of his celebrated Discourse on Natural Philosophy. That it is *a*, not *the*, prevailing opinion among medical men that animal life is nothing more nor less than electricity circulating through the nerves as through wires of copper, is sufficiently shown in the subjoined passage from Carpenter's Physiology, found on page 101:

"Of the actual nature of the changes by which impressions are received on the peripheral origins of the afferent nerves, or communicated to the central origins of the motor, and are conducted along each to their opposite extremities, physiologists have no certain knowledge; that they are electrical has been, and still continues to be, a favorite theory with some; and that there is a great *analogy* between the propagation of nervous and that of electrical influence cannot be denied."

Of course it was understood fully by all the readers of my former communication that I scouted this *galvanic idea* of Herschel, the medical men, and Adams Locke. Whether Professor Draper did or did not take the step in advance which I suggested that he took, I leave to be decided upon the following extract, additional, from his lecture on Phosphorus:

"So, too, the anatomist describes to you the bony skeleton, and how it is covered with a coat of muscles; how these are in relation with the cerebro-spinal axis, through the intervention of nerves. Again, it belongs to physics and chemistry to take up the story, and to explain how every motion must be accompanied by, and indeed *originate in*, chemical changes occurring in the nervous machinery."

It is a matter of not the least concern to me for which of the two schools of philosophers I am booked, whether for the school spiritual or the school material. I doubt the ability of a single member of either to *explain* the difference between his belief and that of a member of the other. If my opinion that an idea of the form and color of a flower is obtained through the action of matter in its connexion with the ethereal substance, or whatever else this may be termed, makes me a materialist, then I am one. I defy any one to give plausibility even to an opinion opposed to it.

By the way, of Professor Faraday's settlement of the table-tipping question: It is really amusing to see with what assurance he pronounces his decision, just as if every particle of testimony had been examined. Like the true Baconian, which he is, he has left entirely out of the account all circumstances and all facts that failed to appeal directly to his senses. Now, it is according to my theory with respect to the "rappings," that the real guardians of them originally made it a part of their plan to lead the public mind into a turmoil touching the matter; so there have been different classes of manifestations to suit the different classes of minds noting them; thus, to the uneducated and the marvellous, the phenomena have been presented in a fancy-exciting aspect, to be accounted for only upon the supposition of a spiritual influence. For the consideration of the conclave of Buffalo Doctors, simply the tapping manifestation was offered, to be easily explained on the knee-joint hypothesis. And now before Professor Faraday is brought the mere table-movement, which is satisfactorily shown to be the result of muscular force exerted unconsciously. Take notice, that I do not intimate any disbelief that the Professor disposed properly of the facts which came under his observation.

In concluding this *bit*, I advance it as my opinion, notwithstanding my *materiality*, that the spiritualists, in their accounting for the "rappings," have had the best of the argument thus far.

G. W. EVELETH.

The Earthquake in Persia.—The earthquake which destroyed Shiraz, Persia, on the 3d of May, was nearly simultaneous with the shock at Washington, Wheeling and Lynchburgh, Virginia, and Zanesville, Ohio, on the 2d. Shiraz is in the vicinity of salt lakes as fully saturated as the water of the Dead Sea. In [illegible] greatly from a severe earthquake, and had not recovered when a second visitation made it a complete ruin. On the 4th of May there was a severe earthquake in the island of Antigua, and on the 5th a shock was felt at Newcastle, Pennsylvania. The earth has been more agitated by earthquakes within the last eighteen months than at any period covered by my records. Within the field of my researches earthquakes have been felt on at least fifteen days of each of the last eighteen months.

New York, July 27. E. M.

Sudden Rising of an African Desert Stream.—About four o'clock in the afternoon there was a cry in the encampment, "El wany jace!" "the Wady is coming!" Going out to look I saw a broad white sheet of foam advancing from the south between the trees of the valley. In ten minutes after a river of water came pouring along and spread all around us, converting the place of our encampment into an isle of the valley. The current in its deepest part was very powerful, capable of carrying away sheep and cattle and uprooting trees. This is one of the most interesting phenomena I have witnessed during my present tour in Africa. The scene, indeed, was perfectly African. Rain had been observed falling in the south; black clouds and darkness covered the zone of the heavens; and an hour afterwards came pouring down this river of water into the dry parched-up valley. This incident of Wady Tinta-ghoda explains the scriptural phrase, "Rivers of water;" for here, indeed, was a river of water appearing in an instant, and almost without notice.

[*Richardson's Narrative of a Mission to Central America.*

New Trade in Slaves.—It was some time since intimated that the Cuban slave dealers had embarked in a new branch of the trade, viz. the introduction of Yucatan Indians into the Island of Cuba. The Havana correspondent of a New York paper gives full particulars of the manner of their capture and introduction, stating that one hundred and eighty of these Indians have been kidnapped and carried to Havana. Extensive preparations had been made to transfer the Indians to Cuba, when the matter was discovered by the British authorities at Honduras, who caused the arrest of the Spanish agent at that place. On the person of this agent was found the terms of agreement with the Havana dealer, showing that twenty-five dollars was to be paid for every male adult Indian, and women and children in proportion. The same correspondent states that Santa Anna has made a peremptory demand upon Gen. Canedo for the immediate liberation and restoration of the kidnapped Indians. The Havana dealer is having prepared sham contracts, purporting to have engaged the Indians to work for him. By this means he will undoubtedly escape all unpleasant consequences of the infamous attempt to make slaves of Indians.

The Christian Advocate has found by actual count the whole number of places where liquor is sold in San Francisco to be five hundred and thirty-seven. Of these eighty-three are purely liquor, in retail line, and fifty-two wholesale; making one hundred and twenty-five places which do not keep an onion to modify the traffic. Of the four hundred and twelve places where it is sold in connexion with other business, one hundred and forty-four are tavern restaurants; one hundred and fifty-four groceries; forty-six gambling houses; and forty-eight supposed to be kept by bawds. Some of these appear genteel, others are dance-houses, and such like, where Chinese, Mexican, Chilian, and other foreign women are assembled. There were five hundred and fifty-six bar-tenders present in the various places at the time when the memoranda were taken. We think we may safely add one-quarter, if not one-third, as reserve corps, making, including women, seven hundred and forty-three bar-tenders in that city.

Untimely.—A characteristic story is told of Judge R., a worthy man, and, in his younger days, an able lawyer, now living in the northern part of Vermont. It is said he was once ambitious of political preferment, but, if so, his success has not been equal to his hopes.

A few years ago, while this old gentleman was attending a session of the Legislature, he was accosted by an old acquaintance with, "Ah, Judge, how d'ye do, and what brings you to the capitol?" "Why," said R., "I came to get an office, but it's of no use, and I shan't try again. For twenty years I came here regularly for an office, but they said I was *too young*, and now that I have grown grey trying to remove that objection, they tell me I am *too old*, and that's a difficulty which I have no hope of outliving: so I give up the chance!" The judge sighed, wiped the dust of Montpelier from his shoes, and never darkened the portals of the capitol afterwards.

PSYCHOMANCY.

Spirit-rappings and Table-tippings exposed, by Prof. Charles G. Page, M.D. Appleton, New York: Taylor & Maury, Washington.

> *Glendower.* I can call spirits from the vasty deep.
> *Hotspur.* Why, so can I, and so can any man;
> But will they come when you do call them?

Our scientific townsman, Dr. Page, appears to have given the *coup de grace* to the ghostly delusions of Psychomancy, or *Soul-divining*. One-half the pamphlet is devoted to the investigation and exposure of spirit-rapping, with its mechanical contrivances and illusions, where the spirits of the illustrious dead—Channing, Webster, Clay, Calhoun—are called up and questioned in turn. Some of the answers, in truth, are absurd enough. "Our late distinguished Secretary of State, for instance, died of Fungus Hœmatodes, and is buried at Newark, New Jersey."

We could wish that Prof. Page had proposed to the erudite spirit of the Rev. Dr. Channing the famous test by which the Rev. Dr. Cox, of Brooklyn, had put to flight the Mormon tempters and false prophets, the elucidation, namely, of any one text in the *Greek Testament*. The medium, we guess, would concur heartily with the monk of old, "Græcum est, non potest legi."

The other portion of the treatise, termed the Odylic, or Wood-travelling agency, shows up the fallacy of table-tipping; and as pretty an exposition it is as could be seen on a summer's day.

May the sacred banner of the Prophet protect the faithful from the cannon of the Russians and the incantations of the Foxes, mother and daughters! Q.

"IRISH NEWS."

There is a column with this heading in every English newspaper. The intelligence in it is always uniform in its character. It is always the same story of eviction, poverty, sale of estates, crime, and emigration. One can trace, day by day, the great change that is gradually coming over Ireland. The removal of those who were born on the soil, and the substitution of another race, goes on slowly but inevitably. That is the "Irish news" for this century, past, present, and to come.

The Liverpool Chronicle lies before us, and we take an item or two from it:

In the Encumbered Estates Court, yesterday week, six estates were disposed of for the large amount of £90,970. On Tuesday no less than fourteen estates changed hands in the Encumbered Estates Court. The produce of the sales was £81,455.

The owners of these estates have yielded to the pressure of the times, with which they have probably been struggling for years. They are reduced to the necessity of seeking some other means of living, which many of them will probably do in England.

The next shows who takes their place:

The purchaser of the Galway estate of the late Mr. John Beatty West, formerly member for the city of Dublin, is Mr. Arthur Pollock, the eminent Glasgow merchant. In addition to the purchase money, (£105,000,) the new proprietor means to expend the sum of £25,000 in farm buildings and other suitable improvements.

One hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars spent in farm buildings and other improvements shows the eminent Glasgow merchant to be a man well to do in the world.

But it contrasts strongly with the pay his laborers can expect. "The shilling or 14d. a day is generally paid here," writes one correspondent. And another adds the effect it produces:

For some weeks past a large proportion of our laboring population have been led by the inducement of higher wages to emigrate. Their departure is not a temporary one, like that of laborers in former years, who proceeded for a few weeks to cut down the harvest, and returned with savings sufficient to pay the rent of the cabin or conacre; but they will probably remain as much expatriated from this country as the more opulent of their class who emigrate to America.

This is the way some of them are employed. Others are driven into desperation and crime. The Louth and Down Pilot has the following account of an agrarian outrage:

"The house of Mr. Hugh Todd, of Ringclare, Donoughmore, a respectable farmer, was fired into on the morning of the 30th ultimo. It would appear that the watch-dog became excited and the servant man was called up to ascertain the cause, but he refused to rise, and Mrs. Todd herself proceeded to inspect the premises. She had [illegible] door, and passing close to her person, lodged in the furniture on the opposite side of the apartment. A second shot was then fired without effect, when Miss Todd, an interesting young woman, fired a shot out of a window in the direction of the door, when a shout was raised, and the ruffians decamped. This is the third outrage committed on Mr. Todd's premises within the last few weeks. Some time ago his ploughs and other farming implements were broken."

And then another and another are described. In due course of time the perpetrators will be on their way to Van Dieman's Land, and few will dispute the justice of it.

Then come the emigration returns:

"The flight from the west shows no sign of abatement. Thinned and exhausted as the population has been for some months past, the rush of emigration seems still unabated. The twelve o'clock train on Monday bore away a crowd of emigrants. A number of their female friends and relatives occupied an eminence above the railway, and their plaintive cries resounded like the wail of a monster funeral. Day after day similar scenes are repeated, so that they now seem to be matters of course."

But there is one gleam of light in the dark story:

One hundred pounds per day is paid at the post office in the town of Roscommon, in small sums, sent by laborers, in order to take over their wives and children.

Five hundred dollars a day! And hardly earned, as we can see here every day, on the railroads and in the streets. Roscommon is not quite as large as Troy. The £100 that come there every day pay the passage of twenty or thirty voyagers across the ocean.—*Albany Journal.*

Sentences by the Commissioners of Police.—Patrick Kelly, sergeant, and John Cusick, of the Ninth Ward police, have been tried by the Commissioners of Police, and found guilty of one of the charges preferred against them for misconduct at the riot between the Hibernian Society and others in Hudson street on the 4th instant. They have each been suspended from pay for thirty days, and it is said that Kelly has been declared inefficient for the post of sergeant. Capt. Ackerman, of the police in the same Ward, has been sentenced to be suspended from pay fifteen days for neglecting to attend the same riot in person. Capt. Wildey, of the Eighth Ward police, pending his trial on certain charges, has resigned.

[*New York Com. Adv.*

The British Post Office.—Official returns have been made public of the business of the United Kingdom for the year 1852, as compared with each of the thirteen previous years. From these official data it appears that the increase in the number of letters since 1840 (when cheap postage was introduced) is fully 125 per cent.; and the net revenue has increased from £500,789 to £1,090,419; although the actual receipts are not yet equal to those of the year 1830, (the last year of the old system.)

The Amazon Steamship and Trading Company of New York have in progress of building at the latter place a large sea steamer and several smaller ones for river service. Large grants of land have been made to this company by the Brazilian and Bolivian Governments, and an agent is to be sent out without delay to take charge of them, to form stations along the river, and to perfect the enterprise. In all probability this company will work in unison with the colonial enterprise undertaken by the Peruvian Government, the commencement of which we noticed some days ago. No valley in the world, except that of our own Mississippi, can compare with that drained by the great Amazon river. If confined to the native Brazilians and Peruvians, it must be many a year before the tide of settlement can extend along its fertile and prolific regions; but if Northern enterprise and capital, aided by the inexhaustible flow of European emigration, are engaged in it, the end will not long remain unaccomplished. Should this company carry through their project, another rich tributary to New York will be opened. Thus it is that the ubiquitous spirit of that city is ever on the alert to seize the chances, and even remote possibilities, of trade. Lieut. Maury, in an able communication published in Washington some months ago, called attention to the undeveloped greatness of the Amazon valley, and dwelt upon the necessity of opening commercial communication with it. The Memphis Southern Convention resolved that a trade with the Amazon ought to be opened by some Southern commercial port. Without talking about it at all New York has obtained grants of land from the Brazilian and Bolivian Governments, is now building steamers to navigate the river, and to sail between it and New York, and is actively employed in preparing to establish stations along its banks. There is a lesson in this for those who can understand the value of commercial enterprise.—*North American.*

THE BRITISH ARMY AND NAVY.

The London Times, in alluding to the tone of discipline to which a division of the British army has been lately subjected on Chobham Common, in the vicinity of Windsor, digresses into the following remarks upon the improved condition in which, for the purpose of national defence, both branches of the British military service have been recently placed. It is worth the consideration of our own Government (says the Boston Daily Advertiser) to inquire whether a hint might not be taken from the imposing condition of the British fleet now at Spithead, compared with what was its state two years ago, for some attempt to reform the condition of our own navy. There was more or less talk on the subject of reforms in the navy in the last Congress, but we are yet without evidence of any important improvement being made. The army, thanks to the influence of the West Point system of instruction, does not need the same process of resuscitation. The Times remarks as follows:

"The chief improvements will probably be effected in the personal equipments of the men. All military authorities are now of opinion that marching is a quality inferior only to that of fighting, and in marching it is obvious that weight must tell. If we can lighten the soldiers' muskets and kits, and so dispose what they still carry that the load may be borne with greater ease, it is plain that we are making each man, and therefore the aggregate of men, so much more efficient than they were before. It was told of the Great Duke that when he first joined the army as an ensign he carefully weighed all the accoutrements of a private soldier, and that in his after estimates of military work he never forgot this unit of measure. In those days, we believe, the equipment in question weighed full 70lb.; it is not less than 60lb. at present; but there is every probability that 12 or 14lbs. at least will be taken off by the improvements now in contemplation. The advantage of this change will be enormous.

"With respect to the fleet, we do at length appear to be achieving two grand points. We seem to have hit upon the right build for steamers, and we are going the proper way to get men. How long we floundered about in ruinous experiments it is not worth while to reckon, but it really now appears that the 'screw line of battle ship' is the particular thing for which we were so long looking in vain. All our work of this description answers admirably, nor have we yet heard of a single screw two-decker which, after being lengthened and fitted with her propeller, was taken into dock to be shortened and adapted to paddle-wheels. The Duke of Wellington is a perfect model, not only of size and strength, but speed and ease. After such examples we can read with fewer misgivings announcements like that in our naval intelligence of yesterday, that 'the Admiralty had ordered six more screw men-of-war to be built, three sail of the line and three frigates.' We only hope so successful a fashion may not soon be superseded.

"As regards the manning of the fleet, we observe that Sir James Graham obtained leave last week to bring in two important bills, one concerning the 'entry and service of seamen generally,' and the other respecting 'naval coast volunteers.' If we rightly understand these announcements, the two points thus aimed at comprehend all our present wants. One bill will provide for the general service of the fleet, the other will aid us in emergencies. It is highly desirable both that ships, when put ordinarily in commission, should 'complete their complements with somewhat less difficulty than at present,' and also that some species of naval reserve may enable us to equip a strong squadron for home service whenever circumstances may seem to require it. The first of these objects we are now attempting to attain by so improving the terms of service that seamen will enter it freely; the second is aimed at, we presume, in the bill for 'coast volunteers.' It has been long ago suggested that the large seafaring population of our coasts should be organized in such a manner as to make the resource available on an emergency without prejudice to the ordinary duties of this class of people, and we conjecture that Sir James Graham's bill is for instituting this species of maritime militia. The scheme need involve neither expense nor trouble, and the training required is very slight. The men in question are ready-made sailors, and nothing is wanted but facilities for a sudden muster."

Another Mountain Borer.—The Hartford Times states that a great Tunnel Borer has just been built in that city by Messrs. Woodruff and Beach, which promises great things. It is operated, as the Times states, by a steam engine of sixty horse power, which drives four piston rods horizontally. These rods turn four half circle plates of stout proportions, on which circular revolving blades are set. These four plates are turned with exactness about one-fourth of a circle and back, and all are set upon a revolving plate of about ten feet in diameter, and, as thus set, cut a circle of seventeen feet in diameter. The machine weighs about eighty tons, and is of stout proportions throughout. The motion obtained by this invention is entirely new. By it the revolving knives, each running its quarter circle, cut completely from the centre to the circumference, and they do their work steadily and surely, cutting a round hole as they are turned by the large or centre plate. A trial of the machine is to be made at Harlem.

Interesting Case.—In the Toledo Republican of the 14th instant we find the following case, recently tried before the Court of Common Pleas in that city:

Michigan Southern Railroad Company vs. The Owners of the Propeller Spaulding.—The jury returned a verdict yesterday afternoon for the plaintiff, awarding damages to the amount of $2,289.85. The facts, in brief, were these: Last fall the railroad contracted to carry a lot of cattle from Chicago to Buffalo. They were brought here by the railroad as usual, to be shipped by the lake to Buffalo. The captain of the propeller Spaulding agreed to take a deck load of the cattle. In driving them on the boat too many got on one side; the vessel careened over and sunk, and about forty of the cattle were drowned. The owner demanded damages of the railroad company with whom he had contracted for the transportation of his property, and obtained satisfaction. The railroad company then commenced the present suit to recover of the propeller the amount lost by the drowning of the cattle. The trial has occupied three days, and resulted as above stated. There was no controversy as to the loss of the cattle, but each party contended that the other was liable. For the defence it was alleged that when the captain of the boat agreed to take the cattle, he expressly stipulated that he would assume no risk. The testimony on this point was somewhat conflicting. It was also contended by the defence that a common carrier was not liable for the loss of live stock or animate matter to the same extent that he would be liable for the loss of inanimate matter, because it was less under his control and more subject to injury. A distinction of this nature, it was said, is recognised among those engaged in the transportation of merchandise by the Lakes. But the great point in controversy seemed to be in relation to the loading of the vessel; both parties had men assisting in driving the cattle on, [illegible] came a nice question to decide who was to blame for the accident, if any one. It would appear from the verdict of the jury that they thought the responsibility rested on the officers of the boat. An appeal, we understand, has been taken to the District Court.

Society in Australia.—A correspondent of the Newark Daily Advertiser, writing from Melbourne, February 20th, gives a sad picture of the state of society in the new settlements. He says:

"This is not the place it is represented to be. The climate is very unhealthy, the weather being so changeable. Society is very low, and it is impossible for any person to venture out of doors after dark, unless with a party of three or four, on account of the great number of English convicts from Van Dieman's Land who infest the place. They number about five hundred, and, meeting you in the street, present a pistol to your breast, order you to hold your hands up over your head, and then rob you. This is what they call 'sticking you.' A gentleman boarding in the same house with me, [illegible] the other afternoon, was robbed of eighteen pounds and then tied to a tree, where he remained until assistance was given him. This practice extends also to the diggings.

"If a bushman, who is generally mounted, perceives a man coming along the road with a better horse than his, he compels him to dismount and exchange horses, and, in case of non-compliance, he makes nothing of shooting him. In going to Forest Creek, Campbell's Creek, Bendigo, and Golden Diggings, you pass through what is called the Black Forest, a dense and thick wood, about twelve miles in length. The other day, while four of us were passing through this forest, we found thirty-five who had been 'stuck up,' and one poor fellow, who unfortunately had but thirteen shillings and sixpence, was tied to a tree and his body filled with shot, which they had fired at him, I suppose, because he had no more. He was released a short time after, and is now in a fair way of recovery. They also 'stuck up' a young lady within sight of her father's house. This was never done here before, and accordingly you may judge of the state of society. The much-boasted police will often turn away and make no attempt to stop such occurrences."

A California Tragedy.—We have been shown a letter from Mr. John Strible, of Marysville, California, written to his parents in this city, in reference to the dreadful tragedy committed at Sacramento by his brother. It states that Joseph Strible, who had for some time been conducting himself in a disorderly manner, and who was occasionally evidently deranged, had some angry words with his brother on Tuesday, the 22d ultimo, and struck at him, when the wife of the latter rushed between them and received the blow, which killed her instantly. Joseph then turned upon Henry and wounded him seriously, but not dangerously. The letter does not state with what instrument the blows were inflicted. Immediately on wounding his brother, Joseph procured a razor and cut his own throat. The writer of the letter did not hear of the occurrence until Thursday, when he proceeded to Sacramento and found both his brothers living. On interrogating Joseph as to the cause of the bloody deed, he replied that "he did not know why he did it, and must have been deranged at the time." He appeared truly repentant, and asked to be forgiven by his parents and friends. He died on Friday, the 25th. Henry, as stated above, was not dangerously injured.—*Baltimore Clipper.*